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Embassy Point of Contact:

Mary Wilson

Phone: 81-3-3224-5342

Fax: 81-3-3224-5322

E-mail: WilsonMT@state.gov

General Assessment

¶1. Japanese leaders have publicly declared their firm commitment to stand by the United States to combat terrorism over the long term. Japanese support for domestic, regional and global counterterrorism efforts remained steady in 2006. Japan is party to all counterterrorism-related UN conventions and is in full compliance with all UNSCRs on terrorist financing. To help stem the flow of terrorist financing to al-Qaida and the Taliban, Japan designated under its asset-freezing program all entities and individuals included on the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee's consolidated list.

¶2. Domestically, Japan continues to bolster its defenses against terrorism to make it harder for terrorists to operate. In March, the Cabinet approved emergency contingency plans for 47 prefectures to better protect the public from terrorist attacks. In May, Japan revised the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to enable immigration officials to collect and electronically store fingerprint and facial imagery from foreigners. This will be implemented by November 2007; diplomats, state guests, and special permanent foreign residents will be exempt from the law. The Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau since Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 has been testing a biometric fingerprint and facial recognition system at Narita and Kansai airports with the aim of identifying people trying to enter Japan on fake passports. This data is checked against a database of known and suspected terrorists.

¶3. Japan in June developed a framework for legislation designed to combat money laundering and terrorist financing and plans to submit the bill to the Diet in early 2007. The Ministry of Finance announced in August that Japanese financial institutions will be required to confirm the identity of customers sending 100,000 yen or more overseas in a bid to clamp down on money laundering. This will be effective starting on January 4, 2007. The Financial Services Agency announced a similar change for domestic remittances.

¶4. The Diet on December 1 passed the Infectious Disease Law to prohibit possession and production of 12 pathogens, including Anthrax and the Ebola Virus to help prevent bioterrorism. The Public Security Intelligence Agency (PSIA) in FY 2007 will establish an International Antiterrorism Office with the aim of expediting information sharing with the Prime Minister's Office. The National Police Agency (NPA) is planning to implement a computerized system, similar to the United States Secret Service system, with the goal of analyzing data on the locations and routes of world leaders attending the 2008 Group of Eight summit in Japan.

¶5. Japan in January 2005 introduced a voluntary Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), to tighten control on suspicious travelers to prevent terrorists from entering Japan. It resulted in 17 arrests in 2005. Japanese authorities in early 2005 revised the Law for the Regulation of Nuclear Source Material, Nuclear Fuel Material and Reactors and are continuing to enhance the physical protection of nuclear materials in Japan.

¶6. Japan is using ODA grants to expand counterterrorism capacity building in Southeast Asia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Economic Cooperation Bureau initiated the Grant for Cooperation on Counterterrorism and Security Enhancement ODA program in FY 2006. This nearly USD 60.86 million annual program includes projects aimed at bolstering piracy prevention, increasing maritime and port security, and preventing weapons proliferation.

¶7. Japan makes valuable contributions to building counterterrorism capacity among Asian countries. Tokyo in January hosted a two-day ministerial conference on

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international transport security to promote cooperation on ground transportation security; officials from 14 countries attended. Foreign Minister Aso in June signed a counterterrorism capacity building plan with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan to combat terrorism and offered equipment and support for border control. This was the first time Japan signed a cooperative action plan with a Central Asian nation. In June, Japan also hosted the ASEAN-Japan Counter-Terrorism Dialogue.

¶8. Japan in July held a seminar on the prevention and crisis management of bioterrorism to strengthen mechanisms to combat CBRN terrorism in the Asia Pacific. Officials from 14 countries and representatives from the World Health Organization, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, and the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) attended. In 2004 and 2005 Japan co-sponsored the same seminar in Malaysia. Japan is an active partner in the Proliferation Security Initiative; Japan participated in exercises, attended all intelligence experts and operational experts meetings and led outreach efforts to draw in regional countries.

¶9. In October, Japan hosted a counterterrorism trilateral meeting with the United States and Australia. It participated in trilateral strategic dialogue talks in November with the United States and Australia to better synchronize regional activities.

¶10. Japan continues to reach beyond the region in its fight against terrorism. The Abe Cabinet in December approved an extension of Japan Air Self-Defense Force airlift operations until July 2007, enabling Japan to continue its support for coalition forces' counterterrorism efforts in Iraq. In October, the Japanese Diet extended for one year the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law that allows for Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). In 2006 the Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) had provided approximately 12,724,000 gallons of fuel to United States and allied naval vessels engaged in OEF.

¶11. Japan has been an active participant in the G-8 Bioterrorism Experts Meeting Group. In 2005 the Japanese sent a large delegation to Atlanta for a G-8 sponsored workshop on food defense. In February 2005, Japan presented a paper on the "Origins, Sources, Culture and Ideology of Terrorism" at the counterterrorism conference in Saudi Arabia.

¶12. Bilaterally, Japan is a responsive partner in the fight against terrorism. The Foreign Ministry in 2005 granted long-term diplomatic status to the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers working on the Container Security Initiative (CSI) in Japan. In 2005, the Customs Bureau was reorganized to facilitate cooperation between Japanese CSI teams and U.S. CBP officers. Japan formally accepted the U.S. Air Marshal program in 2005, and started its own Air Marshal program on flights to and from the United States. Japanese air marshals trained at the United States Federal Air Marshal Training Facility in February 2006. After substantially rewriting its immigration legislation in 2005 to improve enforcement capabilities, Japan agreed in principal in December 2006 to participate in the Immigration Advisory Program (IAP). IAP will be implemented at Narita Airport in January 2006.

¶13. Japan is an advocate and active participant in the International Port Security Program (IPSP). Widely considered a leader in the region in maritime security collaboration, the Government of Japan hosted a number of bilateral and multilateral maritime security events. In 2005, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport's Maritime Bureau established the Port State Control Officer exchange program with the U.S. Coast Guard to exchange best practices in implementing international ship security requirements while boarding foreign flag ships in Japan and close cooperation continued in 2006. Participants from 19 countries discussed measures to tighten nuclear and radiological security at the November 2006 IAEA-Government of Japan Seminar on Strengthening Nuclear Security in Asia.

¶14. The United States did not request terrorism-related extradition from Japan in 2006. We expect Japan to continue its cooperative stance, but the need for "dual-criminality"

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(i.e., the act upon which the extradition request is based must also be considered a crime in Japan) could delay extradition procedures.

Terrorist Sanctuaries

¶15. There are no areas in Japan where terrorists are free to operate. Lax enforcement in airport transit lounges, however, continues to make Japan vulnerable to document switches and transiting criminals. No Muslim fundamentalists have been identified in Japan. Approximately 90,000 Muslims (mainly from Southeast Asia, Pakistan and Iran) reside in Japan, concentrated in the Kanto region. While no concrete evidence has been found connecting an individual to al-Qaida, law enforcement officials continue to monitor suspicious activity.

Information on Terrorist Groups

¶16. There were no incidents of international terrorism in Japan during 2006 and terrorist activity remains low. The National Police Agency (NPA) and the Public Security Intelligence Agency (PSIA) continue to monitor the activities of Aum Shinrikyo, renamed Aleph. In January, the Public Security Examination Commission extended PSIA's legal authority to monitor Aleph for an additional three years (through January 2009). According to the PSIA, at the end of 2005 Aleph had about 650 live-in followers and about 1,000 other followers with 26 facilities in 17 prefectures. The

cult also had about 300 followers in Russia. PSIA inspected at least 29 Aleph facilities in 2005 and at least 25 facilities in 2006.

¶17. The Tokyo District Court in August upheld the death sentence for Aum Shinrikyo member Masami Tsuchiya who was charged with making the sarin nerve gas used in the deadly 1995 attack on the Tokyo subway system. In September, the Supreme Court upheld the death sentence for Aum Shinrikyo founder Chizuo Matsumoto; he is not eligible to file future appeals. In February, the Tokyo High Court upheld the death sentence for Tomomitsu Niimi who was convicted in 2002 for murdering 26 individuals in seven Aum Shinrikyo related cases, including the 1995 sarin attack.

¶18. The Tokyo District Court sentenced Fusako Shigenobu, a former Japanese Red Army (JRA) member, to 20 years in prison in February. Members of the JRA were responsible for seizing the French Embassy in The Hague in 1974 and the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur in 1975. Prosecutors argued for a life sentence for Shigenobu, claiming she is the alleged mastermind of the "Hague Incident," but the court ruled that even though she conspired to take over the French Embassy, she was not physically present during the embassy seizure. As of mid-December, former JRA member Jun Nishikawa remained on trial for his suspected role in a 1977 Japan Airlines hijacking. A verdict is expected on December 26.

Foreign Government Cooperation

¶19. There were no arrests of terrorist suspects in Japan in 2006, but Japan continues to show a willingness to cooperate with the United States on terrorism matters. Police and intelligence authorities remain responsive to terrorism-related requests, including conducting surveillance, developing sources and providing record checks and documentation within the scope authorized by existing Japanese laws. Police and intelligence officials by all appearances take terrorism threats seriously and work well with U.S. law enforcement officials to bring investigations to their proper conclusions.

¶20. In June 2005, the Diet amended the Japanese immigration law to allow the sharing of information with foreign immigration officials. The Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice completed the implementing guidelines and detailed discussions on the logistics of sharing information continue. Since August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has shared lost and stolen passport data on a weekly basis.

SCHIEFFER